

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/026,450
Response dated February 6, 2004
Reply to OA of October 6, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 12 are in the application and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, on grounds of indefiniteness. The claims are also rejected on prior art with claims 1 to 12 being rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated in the alternative by any one of either Nao, et al., JP 8-221637 or JP5-159136 and under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Abe, et al. Objections have been raised by the Examiner against the specification due to an inadequate title and against the claims due to a typographical error in claim 4.

The comments made by the Examiner in the Office Action have been considered and claims 1 to 12 have all been canceled and replaced by new claims 13 to 24 which are believed to define the invention with the degree of structural specificity to comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to distinguish the invention over the respective cited references.

Although the rejections based upon the foregoing references are moot in view of the replacement of claims 1 to 12 with new claims 13 to 24 herein, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application of the patents of Nao, et al., Abe, et al. and the Japanese references, JP8-221637 and JP5-159136, as applied against the originally based claims, for the following reasons:

1. Nao, et al.

Pooling unit 22 of Nao, et al., which corresponds to the temporary storing section (25) of the present invention, only accumulates exterior bills which have been received from the exterior. In Nao, et al., the first conveyance path operates to convey bills for payment for first boxes 24a-24c to

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/026,450
Response dated February 6, 2004
Reply to OA of October 6, 2003

Disbursing Unit 28 without feeding these bills into the Pooling Unit 22. On the other hand, the first conveyance path (21) of the present invention operates to convey bills for payment from the first storing section (21 1a) to a temporary storing section (25). Therefore, this patent fails to disclose the first conveyance path (21) of the present invention as well as the third conveyance path (23) connected to the first conveyance path (21) as embodied in the paper processing apparatus of this invention.

2. Abe, et al.

Storage room 22 of Abe, et al. corresponds to the temporary storing section 25 of the present invention but only stores exterior bills which have been received from the exterior. In this reference, the first conveyance path operates to convey bills for payment from first boxes 25 and 26 to a leaf transfer unit 21 without feeding these bills into the discrimination section 22. On the other hand, the first conveyance path (21) of the present invention is structured to convey bills for payment from the first storing section (21 1a) to the temporary storing section (25). Therefore, the Abe, et al. patent fails to disclose the first conveyance path (21) and the third conveyance path (23) connected to the first conveyance path (21) as structured in the claimed invention.

3. JP8-221673

Unit 24 in this reference corresponds to the temporary storing section 25 of the present invention but only stores exterior bills which have been received from the exterior. Consequently, in this reference, the first conveyance path operates to convey bills for payment from units S1-S3 to unit 16 without feeding these bills into the unit 24 (see path L2 in Fig. 14). Contrariwise, the first

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/026,450
Response dated February 6, 2004
Reply to OA of October 6, 2003

conveyance path (21) of the present invention operates to convey bills for payment from the first storing section (211a) to the temporary storing section (25). Therefore, this reference fails to disclose the first conveyance path (21) and the third conveyance path (23) as connected in the claimed invention.

4. JP5-159136

Unit 28, corresponding in this reference to the temporary storing section 25 of the present invention, stores exterior bills which have been received from the exterior. In this reference the first conveyance path operates to convey bills for payment from units C1-C3 to unit 20 without feeding these bills into the unit 24 (see path L3 in Figs. 1 and 2). On the other hand, the first conveyance path (21) of the present invention operates to convey bills for payment from the first storing section (211a) to the temporary storing section (25). Therefore, JP5-159136 similarly fails to disclose the first conveyance path (21) and the third conveyance path (23) as connected to the first conveyance path (21) in the claimed invention.

It is respectfully submitted that the new claims of the application plainly define the structural configuration of the apparatus which enables the several functional features alluded to in the claims. Moreover, for the reasons given hereinabove, it can be concluded that the claims now in the application define over the cited references. The Examiner is accordingly requested to favorably consider the claims now in the application and to find them to be in a patentable condition.

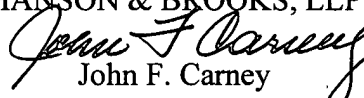
U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/026,450
Response dated February 6, 2004
Reply to OA of October 6, 2003

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS,
HANSON & BROOKS, LLP


John F. Carney
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 20,276

JFC/sc
Atty. Docket No. 011734
Suite 1000
1725 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 659-2930



23850

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosures: Replacement Sheets of Drawing (Fig. 1 and 2)

Q:\FLOATERS\JFC\01\011734 file\amendment.2-6